



News from

Congressman Ron Kind

REPRESENTING WISCONSIN'S THIRD
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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Labor Day Column

By Congressman Ron Kind

A week after Hurricane Katrina ravaged the Gulf Coast, two weeks following a string of tornado touchdowns in south-central Wisconsin, and in the midst of the ongoing conflict in Iraq, this Labor Day comes at a difficult time for our state and our country. Given these challenges, I believe this Labor Day is an appropriate time to recognize the hard work and special efforts of all workers -military, emergency responder or civilian volunteer - who have gone above and beyond the call of duty to help those in need and are working around the clock in regions of strife around the world.

Currently, there are 2,981 active duty military, National Guard, and Reserve soldiers from Wisconsin serving U.S. missions worldwide, 1,774 of which are overseas, and 475 National Guard who were recently mobilized to Louisiana. I am incredibly proud of and thankful for their brave service to this country. Not only are our troops the most effective fighting force in the world, but they are also the most effective humanitarian force.

I also would like to recognize all the volunteers across Wisconsin who have stepped up in unprecedented ways to do their part as well. Earlier this year, La Crosse area citizens raised more than \$500,000 in disaster relief funds for victims of the South Asian tsunami. When western Wisconsin suffered its own natural disaster, throngs of people came to the aid of the Village of Viola and surrounding communities who were hit by the tornadoes in late August. And again, in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the Coulee Region is stepping up once more to provide financial and humanitarian assistance to individuals in the devastated Gulf Coast.

This is a difficult time for our country, and behind your tireless efforts is a compassion that exemplifies the very best of the American spirit in times of national need. You are the unsung heroes of our community, and I want to take an opportunity this Labor Day to thank you for your service and leadership.

Finally, I want to extend a heartfelt message of support to the victims of Hurricane Katrina and their families. We are working hard in Congress to respond to this national catastrophe and make sure the necessary federal aid is delivered and victims are properly assisted.

If you would like to donate to the relief efforts for Hurricane Katrina, please contact the American Red Cross at 1-800-435-7669, visit the Red Cross website at www.redcross.org, or go to the Salvation Army website at www.salvationarmy.org. To volunteer to help the victims, please contact your local Red Cross chapter. For updated response and recovery information you may visit the FEMA web-site at www.fema.gov, for updated response and recovery information. Additionally, my office has compiled a

list of hotlines and websites for missing persons, volunteers and donations available on my web page:
www.house.gov/kind.